

“The Federal tax-gatherer is everywhere. In each exchange by which labour is converted into commodities, there he is standing between buyer and seller to take his toll. Whether it be a match or a locomotive, a dish-cloth or a dress, a new book or a glass of beer, the tax-gatherer steps in. He says to Labour as the day’s toil begins: ‘Ah! you want to do a little work for yourself and family. Well, first work an hour to pay the interest on the national debt and defray the necessary expenses of government; and then another hour for the national banks and subsidised corporations, and the expenses of governing the Southern States! Then an hour for the army and navy and the contractors thereof; then an hour for the manufacturers of New England, and an hour for the iron millionaires of Pennsylvania; half an hour for the Marine Corps and the various comfortable little bureaus; and then, after you have done a little work for your State Government, and a little work for your county and municipal government, and a little work for your landlord—then you can have the rest of the day to work for yourself and family.’ . . .

“Fellow-citizens, negro slavery is dead! But cast your eyes over the North to-day and see a worse than negro slavery taking root under the pressure of the policy you are asked as Republicans to support by your votes. See seventy thousand men out of work in the Pennsylvania coal-fields; fifty thousand labourers asking for bread in the city of New York; the almshouses of Massachusetts crowded to repletion in the summer-time; unemployed men roving over the West in great bands, stealing what they cannot earn. . . . It is an ominous thing that in this Centennial year, States that a century ago were covered by the primeval forest should be holding conventions to consider the ‘tramp nuisance’—the sure symptom of that leprosy of nations, chronic pauperism. . . .

“Be not deceived! You might as well charge the bullet or the knife with being the cause of the death of a murdered man as to think that all the things of which you complain result from the accident of having had bad men in office. What can any change of men avail so long as the policy which is the primary cause of these evils is unchanged?”